

We applaud you and your bipartisan cosponsors for introducing the bill and stand ready to assist you in any way necessary.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM KLEHM,
Chairman and CEO.

INNOVATION ALLIANCE,
MARCH 13, 2014.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: The Innovation Alliance, a coalition of research and development-focused companies, thanks you and your cosponsors for introducing the Patent Fee Integrity Act, which will put an end to fee diversion once and for all. We have long maintained that ending fee diversion, and thereby giving the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office ("USPTO") all of the fees it is paid by patent applicants, is the single most important change policymakers can make to improve the U.S. patent system.

Over the last 20 years, approximately \$1 billion in fees paid by patent applicants has been diverted from its proper use at the USPTO. This unwarranted diversion of fees has resulted in more than 600,000 unexamined patent applications and more than 28 months in the average patent pendency time. Ending this tax on innovation is perhaps the one change to the patent law that unites stakeholders from all parts of the innovation ecosystem in the United States.

The Innovation Alliance thanks you for your leadership on this critically important issue for the patent system. We look forward to working with you and your cosponsors to pass the Patent Fee Integrity Act into law as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

BRIAN POMPER,
Executive Director.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY
OWNERS ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 12, 2014.

Hon. DIANNE FEINSTEIN,
U.S. Senate, Hart Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR FEINSTEIN: Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO) writes to express its strong support for the Patent Fee Integrity Act, to provide for the permanent funding of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO).

IPO is a trade association representing companies and individuals in all industries and fields of technology who own or are interested in intellectual property rights. IPO's membership includes more than 200 companies and more than 12,500 individuals who are involved in the association either through their companies or as inventor, author, law firm, or attorney members. Our members all agree that the United States needs a fully-funded USPTO to keep our nation competitive, encourage innovation and create new jobs.

Over the last two decades the government has withheld, diverted or sequestered about \$1 billion in USPTO user fee collections. Removing the USPTO from the congressional appropriations process is the most promising approach we know for stopping the hemorrhaging of USPTO fees. We hope the Senate will move ahead with the bill as soon as possible.

Thank you for your help in securing full, permanent funding for the USPTO. We stand ready to assist in any way we can.

Sincerely,

HERBERT C. WAMSLEY,
Executive Director.

THE INTERNET ASSOCIATION,
Washington, DC, March 13, 2014.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL BECKERMAN, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE INTERNET ASSOCIATION, ON SENATOR FEINSTEIN'S INTRODUCTION OF THE PATENT FEE INTEGRITY ACT

The Internet Association commends Senator Feinstein's introduction of the Patent Fee Integrity Act, which would provide the Patent and Trademark Office with adequate funding and resources to improve overall patent quality. Improving patent quality is an essential step in improving the entire patent ecosystem by shutting off the supply of low-quality patents that fuel litigation by patent trolls. That is why The Internet Association also supports an expanded review of the covered business method patent program to eliminate patents that never been granted in the first instance. An expanded review program, coupled with strong fee shifting and discovery provisions, make up the necessary components of a meaningful response to the patent troll epidemic. We look forward to working with Senator Feinstein and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee as they prepare to address these important issues in the coming weeks.

ABOUT THE INTERNET ASSOCIATION

The Internet Association, the unified voice of the Internet economy, represents the interests of the leading Internet companies including Airbnb, Amazon, AOL, eBay, Expedia, Facebook, Gilt, Google, IAC, LinkedIn, Lyft, Monster Worldwide, Netflix, Practice Fusion, Rackspace, reddit, Salesforce.com, SurveyMonkey, TripAdvisor, Twitter, Uber Technologies, Inc., Yelp, Yahoo!, and Zynga. The Internet Association is dedicated to advancing public policy solutions to strengthen and protect Internet freedom, foster innovation and economic growth, and empower users. <http://www.internetassociation.org>.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 383—DESIGNATING MARCH 2014 AS "NATIONAL MIDDLE LEVEL EDUCATION MONTH"

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mr. WALSH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 383

Whereas the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the Association for Middle Level Education, the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform, and the National Association of Elementary School Principals have declared March 2014 as "National Middle Level Education Month";

Whereas schools that educate middle level students are responsible for educating nearly 24,000,000 young adolescents between the ages of 10 and 15, in grades 5 through 9, who are undergoing rapid and dramatic changes in their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, and moral development;

Whereas young adolescents deserve challenging and engaging instruction, knowledgeable teachers and administrators who are prepared to provide young adolescents with a safe, challenging, and supportive learning environment, and organizational structures that banish anonymity and promote personalization, collaboration, and social equity;

Whereas the habits and values established during early adolescence have a lifelong in-

fluence that directly affects the future health and welfare of the United States;

Whereas research indicates that the academic achievement of a student in eighth grade has a larger impact on the readiness of that student for college at the end of high school than any academic achievement of that student in high school; and

Whereas in order to improve graduation rates and prepare students to be lifelong learners who are ready for college, a career, and civic participation, the people of the United States must have a deeper understanding of the distinctive mission of middle level education: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates March 2014 as "National Middle Level Education Month";

(2) honors and recognizes the importance of middle level education and the contributions of the individuals who educate middle level students; and

(3) encourages the people of the United States to observe National Middle Level Education Month by visiting and celebrating schools that are responsible for educating young adolescents in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 384—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE CONCERNING THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN SYRIA AND NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES, RESULTING HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES, AND THE URGENT NEED FOR A POLITICAL SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS

Mr. Kaine (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. CARDIN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. BOXER, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. CASEY, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KIRK, Mr. KING, Mr. MARKEY, and Mr. CRUZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 384

Whereas United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139, adopted on February 22, 2014, expresses grave alarm at the significant and rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, in particular the dire situation of hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in besieged areas, most of whom are besieged by the Syrian armed forces and some by opposition groups, as well as the dire situation of over 3,000,000 people in hard-to-reach areas, and deplores the difficulties in providing, and the failure to provide, access for the humanitarian assistance to all civilians in need inside Syria;

Whereas widespread and systematic attacks on civilians, schools, hospitals, and other civilian infrastructure, in violation of international humanitarian law, continue in Syria, and parties to the conflict are blocking humanitarian aid delivery, including food and medical care from many civilian areas;

Whereas the World Health Organization estimates that 70 percent of Syria's health professionals, up to 80,000 people, have fled the country, cases of typhoid, tuberculosis, polio and other diseases are rampant and increasing, and medical personnel inside Syria are deliberately targeted by parties to the conflict;

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has registered

more than 2,500,000 Syrian refugees, nearly 80 percent of whom are women and children, and by the end of this year, the United Nations estimates the number of refugees will increase to 4,000,000;

Whereas nearly 500,000 refugees from the Syrian conflict are children under the age of five, and more than 11,000 children have been killed and thousands more have suffered severe injuries, including burns, shrapnel wounds, the severing of limbs, and spinal cord injuries;

Whereas over 5,000,000 children affected by the conflict desperately need food, clean water, shelter, medical care and psychosocial support;

Whereas, since 2011, nearly 3,000,000 Syrian children have been forced to quit their education as fighting has destroyed classrooms, left children too terrified to go to school, and forced families to flee the country;

Whereas the refugee crisis threatens the stability of the Middle East, putting immense burdens on Syria's neighbors, most notably Lebanon and Jordan, as well as Turkey and Iraq; and

Whereas the United States Government has played a leading role in addressing the Syria crisis, providing \$1,700,000,000 in humanitarian assistance to those suffering inside Syria, as well as to refugees and host communities in the neighboring countries: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) strongly condemns the unlawful use of violence against civilians by all parties to the conflict in Syria, particularly the ongoing violence and widespread human rights violations perpetrated against the people of Syria by the Government of Syria;

(2) urges all parties to the conflict to immediately halt indiscriminate attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure;

(3) affirms the neutrality of medical professionals providing humanitarian assistance and health care on a non-political basis, and condemns attacks against such personnel or interference in the provision of medical care;

(4) urges all parties in Syria to allow for and facilitate immediate, unfettered access to humanitarian aid throughout the Syrian Arab Republic, respecting the safety, security, independence, and impartiality of humanitarian workers and ensuring freedom of movement to deliver aid;

(5) supports the immediate and full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 2139 (2014), which calls for unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance to all Syrians to addresses the rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Syria, in particular the dire situation of hundreds of thousands of civilians trapped in besieged areas, most of whom are besieged by the Syrian armed forces and some by opposition groups, as well as the dire situation of over 3,000,000 people in hard-to-reach areas;

(6) calls on the international community to assist the people of Syria, especially internally displaced persons and refugees, in meeting basic needs, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water;

(7) calls on the international community to support civilians and innocent victims of the conflict in Syria, particularly women and children who are displaced and vulnerable to physical and psychological exploitation;

(8) calls on the international community to implement steps that prevent gender-based violence, and assure the protection of women and girls against sexual exploitation, human trafficking, and rape;

(9) calls on the international community to continue to support neighboring countries and host communities who are generously

supporting refugees fleeing the conflict in Syria;

(10) calls on the international community to increase investment for education in host communities to expand learning opportunities for refugee children and to support programs that help children gain access to quality education, protect them from violence and abuse, and provide counseling and psychosocial support;

(11) calls on countries that are hosting refugees in the region to support refugee self-reliance and dignity by expanding employment opportunities for refugees;

(12) calls on international donors and aid agencies to integrate humanitarian relief and longer term development programs through a comprehensive regional strategy to address the protracted crisis in Syria; and

(13) calls on the President to develop and submit to the appropriate committees of Congress within 90 days from adoption of this resolution a strategy for United States engagement in addressing the Syrian humanitarian crisis, to include assistance and development, and protecting human rights inside Syria and in the region.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, today, along with Senator RUBIO, I am submitting a bipartisan resolution to coincide with the third anniversary of the Syria crisis.

We are witnessing one of history's greatest humanitarian catastrophes unfolding before our eyes. The numbers are staggering. Nearly 3 million Syrians have fled to neighboring countries. Syrians are about to pass Afghans as the world's biggest refugee population.

The UN released a report this week stating Syria has become the world's most dangerous place for children. This is truly heartbreaking. More than 5.5 million children are in need of desperate humanitarian assistance and three million are out of school. 40,000 babies have been born as refugees.

Conditions inside are even worse. There are nearly 7 million internally displaced persons and over 9 million in need of humanitarian assistance. Nearly 250,000 remained besieged, mostly at the hands of the Assad regime, and are suffering from disease and starvation.

The Syria Humanitarian Resolution of 2014 strongly condemns the unlawful use of violence against civilians by all parties to the conflict in Syria, particularly the ongoing violence and widespread human rights violations perpetrated against the people of Syria by the Government of Syria.

The resolution urges all parties to the conflict to immediately halt indiscriminate attacks on civilians and to allow for immediate, unfettered access to humanitarian aid throughout the Syrian Arab Republic, respecting the safety, security, independence, and impartiality of humanitarian workers and ensuring freedom of movement to deliver aid. We call on the international community to assist the people of Syria, especially internally displaced persons and refugees, in meeting basic needs, including access to food, health care, shelter, and clean drinking water. Finally we call for the full implementation of UN Security Council 2139 and call on the President to submit to the

appropriate committees of Congress within 90 days a strategy for United States engagement in addressing the Syrian humanitarian crisis, to include assistance and development, and protection of human rights inside Syria and in the region.

The solution to the Syrian conflict will be complicated. But the people of Syria should not continue to suffer in the interim. I refuse to accept that there is nothing more we can do to end the suffering. Humanitarian relief and access are fundamental principles all parties should adhere to. History will harshly judge those who do not.

SENATE RESOLUTION 385—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING THE USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES ON THE FLOOR OF THE SENATE

Mr. WHITEHOUSE (for himself and Mr. ENZI) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration:

S. RES. 385

Resolved, That it is the Sense of the Senate that—

(1) certain uses of electronic devices by Senators on the floor of the Senate are necessary and proper in the conduct of official Senate business, would not distract, interrupt, or inconvenience the business of Members of the Senate, and should therefore be permissible, including—

(A) delivering floor remarks from text displayed on personal digital assistant devices and tablet computers;

(B) reviewing and editing documents on personal digital assistant devices and tablet computers while seated or standing at a desk, except when the Senator who wishes to use the device holds the floor or seeks to be recognized; and

(C) sending email and other data communication using personal digital assistant devices and tablet computers while seated or standing at a desk, except when the Senator who wishes to use the device holds the floor or seeks to be recognized;

(2) necessary and proper uses of electronic devices on the floor of the Senate do not include—

(A) transmitting sound for any purpose other than through earphones or in such a manner as would not disturb proceedings on the floor of the Senate for the purpose of assisting a person with a disability;

(B) using telephones or other devices for voice communication; or

(C) using desktop computers, laptop computers, or other large devices;

(3) the Committee on Rules and Administration should consider an amendment to the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing consistent with the principles stated above; and

(4) any amendment to the Rules for the Regulation of the Senate Wing should take into account possible future changes in technology.

SENATE RESOLUTION 386—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL SOCIAL WORK MONTH AND WORLD SOCIAL WORK DAY

Ms. STABENOW (for herself, Mr. BEGICH, Mr. COONS, Mr. DURBIN, Mrs.